

Idaho Trade Token Newsletter

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News

Mike Fritz took this photo last summer; the shot was taken (as nearly as he could tell) at the site of the earlier pictures we have seen of Grand Forks. His Anheuser token also was making a return trip to its old stomping grounds!

I have long thought that a fun hobby would be to revisit the scene of old Idaho photos (from postcards, etc), and to take a shot with the same composition. It is amazing to see the changes wrought by man and nature in just a few years. And to think that we are in a relatively young area!

Mystery Counterstamp

Counterstamps are marks, usually letters or numbers, but sometimes other symbols, which have been struck into a coin or token. Sets of hard steel punches with individual letters and numerals were available through hardware dealers. They were often used to mark equipment with the name of the owner. There is a whole hobby of collecting counterstamped coins. Many of these counterstamps were made to advertise a business, and the stamp was custom made to show a whole name with one blow. but some counterstamps were done with individual characters as we almost always see on tokens.



The usual explanation for a counterstamped token is that they were done to settle accounts at the time a business changed hands. As an example, if Joe sold his saloon to Sam, then all the tokens on hand at the time of the sale would be counterstamped with an "S". Sam would continue to redeem all tokens from the saloon, but he would take the non-counterstamped ones to Joe for redemption. This scenario is only logical if Joe stayed in the area, of course. And it is obvious that many counterstamps were accomplished with less sophisticated means such as using a nail for a punch, filing the edge, or drilling a hole through the piece.

Now for the mystery: Mike Fritz obtained a couple of tokens from the Camas Prairie area which were counterstamped "ZZ" on each side. One was a maverick, THE PALACE / R. Y. BOGARD, PROP. that Hemphill has attributed to Burns, Oregon based on a 1928 directory listing "R. Y. Bogard, pool &c.". The other was SHAMROCK / PASTIME / CHAS. DICKEY. This piece is attributed to John Day, Oregon in Hemphill's book, but without a supporting directory listing. Hemphill notes that the token is "c/s Z" and also lists a series from SNYDER & DICKEY / PASTIME / JOHN DAY, ORE.

The Idaho connection is at Ferdinand. Schell showed the SHAMROCK / PASTIME / CHAS. DICKEY piece as #FERD-3, but supplied no supporting information. I do know that Boise coin dealer John Cooper had gotten a quantity of these pieces in the Lewiston area a number of

years ago, and I think all of them had the "ZZ" counterstamp. Additionally, I have seen #FERD-1, HAENER'S / BEER / PARLOR / FERDINAND with the "ZZ" counterstamp.

I do know that Charles Dickey was in the area. He was counted in the 1910 census as a single 33-year-old farm laborer boarding at the Fry farm at Ferdinand. And, in a Ferdinand news item from the May 12, 1932 Cottonwood **Chronicle** was "Mrs. Charlie Dickey of Portland, a sister of Mrs. Hanson [sic], who was visiting at the Ole Hansen home died at the Cottonwood hospital last week from a ruptured appendix. She was buried at Craigmont Monday afternoon." Ole G. and Mary Hansen's farm was enumerated only 20 residences away from the Fry farm in the 1910 census. A follow-up look at the death certificate for Isabel Dickey revealed that she was a resident of John Day, Oregon, and was born July 2, 1879 at Trondhjem, Norway. I suspect that the Cottonwood **Chronicle** misreported that she was from Portland, and that she may have immigrated from Norway and was living with her older sister when she met Dickey.

Gilmore, Idaho by Dean Rasmussen

Another collector recently asked me if there was really a Blazing Rag Saloon in Gilmore, Idaho and if the tokens from there are authentic. That started my interest in doing this article.

Development of the lead-silver ore veins in the Gilmore area began around 1882 with the development of the Viola mine which led to the establishment of the town of Nicholia nearby. The Spring Mountain (Hahn) and Texas Creek (Gilmore) veins were also seeing some development at this time. The ore was hauled by wagon to Camas, Idaho, which was the nearest railroad connection. The ore vein at Nicholia ran out in 1889 and work there and at the other nearby areas stopped.

Joe Bush owned the claims at Horseshoe Gulch about 1/2 mile west up the hill from Texas Creek (Gilmore). In 1902 Edgar Ross bought the claims from Joe Bush and interested his brother, A. S. Ross, and some associates from Dubois, Pennsylvania in developing the claims. They formed the Pittsburg-Idaho Mining Co. and began developing the mines. A small community sprang up around the mines and was called Gilmer after Jack Gilmer, who ran the Gilmer-Salisbury Stage Lines and was a friend of Edgar Ross. An error by the postal system resulted in the name of Gilmore.

They began hauling ore out of "Upper" Gilmore by wagon to the railroad connection that was located in Dubois by this time. The hauling of the ore was an expensive and time-consuming process, so plans were begun for a direct railroad spur to Gilmore. The mining company was able to secure financing for this spur through the Northern Pacific railroad and work actually started in 1909. The original plan called for the spur to run from Armstead, Montana to Gilmore with a branch at the town of Junction to run north to Salmon, Idaho. Thomas D. Powell, a Junction saloon owner wanted more money to grant a right-of-way to the railroad so the railroad simply bypassed Junction and established the town of Leadore of few miles farther southwest. This is the same T. D. Powell who issued the Junction tokens. As so often happens, Junction died out without the benefit of the railroad, where Leadore prospered with it. T. D. Powell had also moved to Leadore by 1911.

In anticipation of the 1910 arrival of the Gilmore-Pittsburg Railroad, Edgar Ross began development of lower Gilmore about 1/2 mile down the hill in the flat lands around Texas Creek. The arrival of the railroad at Gilmore in 1910 caused a business boom. The town grew rapidly and prospered through the early 1920's. The streets were laid out and named after different types of metals. The Blazing Rag Saloon was built on the northeast corner of Porphyry and Silver streets. Kendall Ballard in the early 1970's wrote an article for the Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society in their publication **Snake River Echoes** about "The Blazing Rag Saloon". Kendall wrote

"Tom Fayle started the first saloon in a boarded or walled up tent with dimensions of 14' x 16'. Tom felt a partner was a must in the saloon business so he traveled to Dubois and met with Jim Webster who had arrived in Dubois in 1901 from Springfield, Ohio". According to Kendall, Jim jumped at the chance to go in as a partner in the saloon business and they began building a log dwelling in Gilmore for their new saloon. He wrote "One hot day an old freighter, who hauled ore in wagons from Gilmore to the railroad at Dubois, sat down in front of the tent saloon. He lit a hand rolled Bull Durham cigarette and touched his match to the flap in the opening of the tent. The fire was put out easily but from that time on it left its name on the premises "The Blazing Rag Saloon".

The diagram shown in Dick and Bob Moll's 1995 book, **A History of Gilmore**, shows that Tom Fayle's original saloon was in an area called Ragtown at the base of the hill just above lower Gilmore. This may have been the location of the original Blazing Rag Saloon. The log building Tom and Jim built in lower Gilmore was also called "The Blazing Rag" and was run by Jim. This business later became known as the Gem Saloon. Jim Webster, at this time, was also a partner with Luther Yeamen in Dubois who ran the Yeamen and Webster pool hall. I think the name of this saloon "The Blazing Rag", as well as it being from a ghost and mining town makes it one of the most desirable Idaho tokens. There are two known examples of the 24mm brass token.



Some of the other businesses that sprang up in lower Gilmore also issued tokens. Julius Muhlberger had a saloon that evolved into a soda fountain, drug store and eventually housed the local theater. For a short time he was in partnership with Louis R. Britt and is listed in the 1918 Dun & Bradstreet business directory as "Muhlberger & Britt- soft drinks". Muhlberger's Place is shown on Bob Moll's map as being on the south side of

Silver Street between Porphyry and Quartzite Avenues. Only one example of their 24mm aluminum token is known.

Nettie's was a bordello run by Madam Nettie (her last name is unknown at this point) at the north end of Porphyry Avenue. She had operated for many years in various mining camps in the west, eventually selling her business in Gilmore to Sadie Wedgewood and retiring to Dillon, Montana. There, she joined the Ladies League for Good Government and was part of "High Society". There are two known 21mm brass Nettie's tokens, #GIL-5, both having been dug in Gilmore. Nettie probably had them made as mavericks on purpose; the 10c denomination may indicate they were used for card games or other activities separated from her primary business.



Jess Allen was another notorious bordello operator from the mining camps who opened a business in Gilmore. William Stibal Pettite in his book **Memories of Market Lake, Volume 2**, describes Jess Allen, "who never used his real surname" as a "very quiet man (who had) a gaming house and dance hall girls". In a personal correspondence with me, he provided the following information from his notes. "After the mines around Nicolai closed, Jess Allen more or less closed his bordello operations and ran gaming places. He had a small operation in Dubois but went on a bigger scale at Gilmore as the area developed. Some of his bordello girls were "Alice from Challis", "Big Emma",



and "Little Gussie". He appears to have helped "Nice Ethel" set up her own "house" in Gilmore. He went to visit Madam Nettie in Dillon and decided to retire there as well since Montana was one of the last states to go dry. He invested in land in that area and had a large church funeral in Dillon" when he passed away.

The 1910 Idaho census lists Jess Allen in Dubois. It shows he was born in Iowa and lists his age as 29. The 1915 Dun & Bradstreet business directory lists an Allen & Webster as billiards. I assume this was a partnership between Jess Allen and Jim Webster. GIL-6 is the 24mm aluminum maverick from Jess Allen, another "on-purpose" maverick.

Thomas R. Benedict ran Benedict's Meat Market for his uncle John Benedict which was located on the corner of Gold Street and Porphyry Avenue. He is listed in the 1920 and 1921 Dun & Bradstreet business directory as Benedict & Wilson-billiards. I found one reference to Tom buying out Fayle Bros. Meat Market across the street from the Blazing Rag Saloon(Gem), so this may have been where his billiard business was located. I couldn't find any other information about Wilson. #GIL-4 is 21mm brass and is the commonest Gilmore token [4 known].



Gilmore Pool Hall tokens [#GIL-2, 21mm brass, 2 known] have been dug in Gilmore and I assume are from there. I'm unsure where this business was located although there are a number of pool hall and saloon businesses listed in various references. Some of these are Anderson's Pool Hall, Sharkey & Co.saloon, A. L. Widdowson's saloon, and the Perrin Bros. saloon. Dean & Spinsley is also listed as cigars & confectionery.

Gilmore thrived from 1910 until the mid 1920's. In 1929, with the start of the depression, the mining stopped and Gilmore began a slow decline. It maintained a post office until 1957. The Gilmore & Pittsburg railroad hung on through the 1930's. In 1940 the tracks were scrapped for metal for the war effort and the business was dissolved in 1946. The town of Armstead, Montana, where the G & P connected with the Oregon Short Line, was submerged under the Clark Canyon Reservoir when the Clark Canyon Dam was built in 1961.

Dick Moll now lives full time in Gilmore and oversees the property for a real estate developing firm. He is in the process of revising his 1995 book, **The Gilmore Townsite**, which you would find very interesting to read. There are some very nicely-detailed maps of Gilmore in his book. He's fun to visit and welcomes anyone with additional information about Gilmore. I checked but he hasn't found any Gilmore tokens!

Seen one???

In the **Moscow Evening Journal** of April 15, 1906 under the headline "Good Habit - Get It" was an article about an Idaho collectible. "A neat bronze metal button bearing the inscription '1910, Moscow Population 10,000' now decorates the breasts of some 50 of Moscow's boosters. The buttons were ordered some time ago by the club but owing to the heavy work[load] of the manufacturers there has been considerable delay in their shipment. 'I would like to have it made

known that we have received a thousand buttons from Congressman (Burton L.) French,' said Mr. Stillinger. 'These buttons are to be given away and are to be worn by the ladies of the club only. The metal buttons will be sold for 50¢ each and are to be worn by the gentlemen members. We hope that the sale of these buttons will net the club a neat sum.' I can only assume that there were two types of these buttons, one for men and another for women.

The Grangeville **Idaho County Free Press** of November 12, 1908 stated that "Commercial Club members sold about 400 booster buttons 'Grangeville, Idaho 10,000 in 1910' at \$1.00 each". It appears that the ten thousand figure was a significant goal for Idaho towns. It would not surprise me to hear of other towns which used buttons as boosters. Have any of you seen one?

The Latest Error Token

Robert Higden recently visited the Boondocks Fun Center, located just south of Interstate 84 west of Meridian. The complex is a "Limited Liability Corporation", formed in 1997, and owned by a St. George, Utah firm, Select Investment & Management Co. He found that they used tokens in their operation, but the ones he obtained had an error in the telephone number. The token shows 1-208-808-0900, but the real number is 898-0900.



Jerome F. Jacobs

The 1903 **Illustrated History of North Idaho** contains a number of biographies, one of which I quote: "Jerome F. Jacobs is one of the well known business men of Wallace and at present is conducting a popular resort, known as Jerome's place. He was born in Portland, Oregon, on January 12, 1853. His parents were Hiram S. and Nancy (Olds) Jacobs. The father was a native of New York, crossed the plains with ox teams in 1847 to Portland, and in 1864 returned to New York. He died in the city of Mexico, in 1900, aged seventy-one. He was a well known mining man of the early days in Idaho, Colorado, Utah, South America, and so forth. The mother of our subject was born in Michigan and now lives in McMinville, Oregon. Her parents were early pioneers of Oregon, crossing the plains with ox teams in 1847. She was married in Oregon. Jerome F. was raised in Portland until 1864 and then went to New York with his parents, where he completed his education





and studied civil engineering. In 1868 he went to Colorado and wrought in that line and in 1871 Mr. Jacobs came to Utah and followed civil engineering and the liquor business for ten years. Thence he journeyed to Nevada and returned to Utah, and in 1884 we find him one of the pioneers in the Eagle City country. Later he went to the Wood river country, and thence to Fairhaven, Washington, where he remained through the boom of that country. It was in 1892 that Mr. Jacobs came to

Wallace, and since that time he has been one of the active business men of the place. Mr. Jacobs has one brother and one sister, Martin H., mining inspector of Idaho; Nettie Ungerman, in McMinnville, Oregon. In 1885 Mr. Jacobs married Miss Josephine Wheeler at Ketchum, Idaho." Records from Alturas County show this marriage was to Lizzie Josephine Wheeler on February 13, 1887.

Richard Magnuson supplied this information: "The various directories here list his business location as Sixth and Avenue A., or 309 Sixth Street, both addresses identify the same location. I find it very interesting to note that "Avenue A" was a one block long alley, with a gate across its mouth, wherein there were cribs located for the working girls. In the 1940's, local jokesters called it Chamberlain Street [in reference to the British Prime Minister who negotiated with Hitler to establish peace in Europe]. These jokesters reasoned it was a place for "peace at any price". His name last appears in the Polk directory for Wallace in 1908. My father often mentioned Jerome Jacobs, but that was not unusual as he knew every saloon keeper in Wallace before Prohibition, as his father was also engaged in that business."

Jacobs moved to Boise in 1908, opening Jerome's place at 114 North 8th Street. An interior view is shown above. His first wife either died or they were divorced, as Ada County records show his marriage to Mildred Hines on January 21, 1912 in Boise. He continued business as a confectionery after Prohibition, but sold out to Thomas J. Scanlon, an advertising salesman, in 1917. Scanlon called it Jerome's soft drinks for the few years he was able to keep the business open.



The Boise **Evening Capital News** reported Jacobs' death on February 18, 1918: "Jerome F. Jacobs, a business man of Boise for the past 10 years died Sunday morning at his home on Owyhee boulevard. He had been ill for several months, having suffered a general breakdown. He was 66 years of age and is survived by his wife, a sister in Oregon, and a brother in New York. Mr. Jacobs was engaged in business in Mackay and at Wallace previous to coming to Boise. He was well known in Boise, having operated the buffet adjoining the city hall on Eighth street."

#WALL-24 is 21mm and brass, known in four examples. The Boise mavericks are #BO-49 and -[A]. The -[A] variety is not shown, but is also 21mm, brass. It is 12½¢ and a little more scarce than the BO-49 variety shown. Both are known in about 10 examples.

Best regards,

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